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encoding voice data in a signal to transmit using either the first speech coder or the second speech coder;

a signal strength detector in the mobile unit which determines the quality of the signals received by the mobile unit; and

a coder selector in the mobile unit which directs the mobile unit to switch from the first speech coder to the second speech coder when the quality of the signals exceeds predetermined levels.

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8. (Amended) A method of conserving power in a wireless communication system comprising the acts of

determining the quality of at least one signal received from a base station; and

selecting in a mobile unit a secondary speech coder when the signal quality exceeds a predetermined value.

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18. (Amended) A wireless communication system comprising;
a processor usage indicator which determines the loading on a processor in a mobile unit; and

a speech coder selector in a mobile unit which causes the mobile unit to use a secondary speech coder when the loading on the processor exceeds a set value.

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20. (Amended) The wireless communication system of Claim 18, wherein the secondary speech coder saves power.

21. (Amended) The wireless communication system of Claim 18, wherein the secondary speech coder reduces processor loading.

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24. (Amended) The wireless communication system of Claim 23, wherein the secondary speech coder is not bit-exact.